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HISTORY
OF
THE HAMMOND FAMILY



AN ADDRESS
DELIVERED BY
MRS. LAURA WEBB-PEPLOE
AT
HAMMOND CEMETERY
GAMBRILL'S, MD.
ON
FLAG DAY
JUNE FOURTEENTH
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY-TWO



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HISTORY OF THE HAMMOND FAMILY



IF, in attempting to give you a condensed history of the Hammond family, I should begin with a valued and honored Norman knight who helped to place William the Conqueror upon the throne of England, and if I should give a long line of brilliant names including bishops, abbots, soldiers, statesmen, two officers who went with Raleigh on his gold-hunting expedition to Guinea, and if I should mention a Hammond who was a physician to James I, and another of the name who was Chaplain to Charles I, and a Master of the Rolls, and end by telling you of a stout-souled Hammond who, at the risk of his life and loss of his fortune, sheltered his King, Charles I, when driven from the throne of England—all of them English ancestors of the Hammonds—it might be objected that the matter, while interesting is scarcely relevant for this occasion; and that it is from America and not from England that the history must come.

Fortunately, however, to suggest the early history of Maryland and Virginia is to suggest the name of Hammond and their kinsmen.

If one reads the Journal of the Virginia Company for the year 1609 he will find that a Hammond was a member of the Council of that Company; if one reads the charter for the establishing of a colony in Virginia granted by James I to twelve gentlemen, he will find

that a Hammond was one of the twelve gentlemen to whom it was granted; if one reads the Journal of the House of Burgesses from 1635 to 1652, he will frequently come across the name of a Hammond who sat during these years; if one reads "Leah and Rachel," the first book written about the colonies of Maryland and Virginia, and turns to the first page, he will find it was written by a Hammond.

The first of the Hammonds to remain in Maryland, however, was Major-General John Hammond, who was born in 1643 and died in Maryland in 1707. Major-General John Hammond was one of the most eminent of early Marylanders, and played a very considerable part in shaping the destiny of this colony. He was Judge of the Vice-Admiralty, Major-General of the Western Shore, Member of the House of Burgesses, Judge of the Provincial Court, and for nine years he was a member of Their Majesties' Council.

Major-General John Hammond had four sons and two ^{mi} daughters. To-day we have to do with but one of these sons—Major Charles Hammond, who inherited this plantation from his father, but the collateral lines are just as satisfying.

Major Charles was a Major in the Colonial Army, a member of the General Assembly, Commissioner of the Land Office, Treasurer of the Western Shore of Maryland, and also member of His Majesty's Council.

By referring to the Archives of Maryland, you will find that Major Charles Hammond figures conspicuously in the correspondence of Governor Sharpe. Indeed, we are told that Major Charles was no less eminent than his father, Major-General John Hammond. It seems that the

office of Treasurer combined that of Secretary as well, for we find an order on a London shop for munitions written by Major Charles Hammond. It reads as follows:

- 20 ½ Barrels of Gun Powder
- 1 Barrel of Flints
- 6 Great Guns (4-Pounders)
- 1 Black and Yellow Flag 24 ft. by 16 wide
- 12 Drums and 12 pairs of Drum Sticks
- 10 Trumpets and a Mouthpiece to each Trumpet

We must remember that in the early days of 1700 Indians were lurking in the woods, and bad feeling had begun to exist between Great Britain and France, and the French and Indian Wars were not so far off.

The Hammonds held patents and land grants aggregating thousands and thousands of acres. They owned a very large part of Anne Arundel, Howard and Frederick counties and large estates on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

There is wonderful charm and picturesqueness about this old plantation, the homestead—one of the oldest in the country—is a deservedly prominent one, holding as it does, the key to many distinguished families. This Hammond Manor House was build by Major Charles Hammond about the year 1700.

The Hammonds, despite the high official and military positions that they held, were preeminently "home folk." They conceived delightful ideals in planning their homes, and had the means and material with which to construct costly and elegant houses in many parts of this State, upon which they lavished a great abundance of careful and loving thought. Essentially country gentlemen, they loved the solitude of great country homes. A number of

these old homes still stand in many parts of the State. They are a suggestive outcropping of wealth, luxury, hospitality and good cheer. We may mention "Font Hill," "Solitude," "Success Farm," "Acton," "White Hall," "Burleigh," adjoining "Doughoregan Manor," and "Harwood House," which should be called "Hammond House," in Annapolis, said to be one of the finest specimens of Colonial architecture extant in America.

This survival at Gambrill's is perhaps one of the simplest houses built by the Hammonds of Colonial times. You will note it possesses no detail of classical architecture, no exterior ornamentation. More than likely Major Charles was his own architect, and the very substantial work was carried out by skilled carpenters from England, for after all these years it still stands unshaken upon a firm foundation measuring some six feet in thickness. Obviously, the builders of those days did their work with care and with regard to permanence that does not mark all modern erections. Before recent alterations and additions had been made to this building, it was a long, low, graceful one, with high ceilings on the first floor, and it arose to nearly two full stories with dormer windows extending along the front roof. There are massive chimneys at either end, and huge fireplaces which are now planked up.

Built after the English fashion, there is a wide central hall with two large handsome square rooms on either side, and in this instance there are two smaller rooms, in the rear, on either side. The hall and drawing room are handsomely panelled in oak from floor to ceiling. This panelling has been spoiled by many coats of paint! A wide, easy stairway with mahogany rail and newel posts makes a good picture.

In the days of the Revolution, this house was the pride of the community, and even after the Civil War it was still called the "house" or the "great house" of the neighborhood.

Set upon a commanding site, one may look in every direction upon magnificent views of rare pastoral loveliness stretching out in front to some little green hills that seem to "skip like lambs" into the woodlands standing guard. From the rear hall door one seeks to discern what was once an extensive English garden, and until a few years ago there might be seen remnants of the box, lilac, snow-ball and other shrubs planted there by some ancient gardener, and about this garden there still remained stretches of the old stone wall that had been built there years ago by the hands of slaves.

This plantation, as you know, is now owned by the United States Government, and is known as the "Government Farm." Under Uncle Sam's intensive and scientific farming methods the stone wall has been ground up to help make cement walks, and the old shrubs have given way to alfalfa and clover.

Beyond this garden on the hillside were orchards, beautiful in the blossoming time, and still further beyond was the deer park where stalked the celebrated herd of deer. Now, one sees herds of gentle Holstein cattle to the number of five hundred or more grazing there and elsewhere.

Resting side by side to the left, under huge trees, dogwood and honeysuckle, are the remains of troops of black slaves, capable and faithful servants, that made plantation life possible. The cabins that remained after the Civil War—"Jack's House," "John's House," "Aunt

Rachel's House," and others—have vanished, and there remains no vestige of negro quarters, no sign of the system of slavery. Instead of the old salutation: "Servant Missus," one hears the almost unintelligible greeting of a laborer from Continental Europe, or of some tattooed man from the East.

This old home has held many a gay party from the Colonial days of brocade and wigs to the Civil War days of calico and homespun. It was the custom of all the neighborhood to gather here, and many came from distant plantations for its hospitable cheer and too much stimulation, where the fiddles scraped and the candles twinkled to the measures of the minuet and the reel.

True to their English heritage, the Hammonds were keen sportsmen. Gentlemen met together here very frequently, for there was a race course and racers, and packs of fox-hunting dogs and trained fox-hunting horses, and then evenings of song and story before the blazing fireplaces.

We look up the old-fashioned stairway and seem to hear children's voices shout and call, as six generations of Hammond children went up and down, up and down; and as in a vision we behold generations of men and women come and go, come and go.

True to an ennobling tradition, many ghosts wandered here at night, and the house had its dark gallery, or "dark place," which one always hurried by. There were mischievous ghosts full of pranks, and there were mournful ones that went sobbing and moaning. The most dreaded of them all was the one who held aloft a great tray of glass and china and at the quietest hour of the night would violently dash it to the floor, bringing

everyone to sit upright in bed, and sending the blood cold through the veins as the particles broke into thousands of bits and the chuckling spirit hurried on.

Stirring scenes have taken place within the walls of this old home. As husbands and sons have said good-bye to mothers and wives and children, and clothed in the uniform of their day, have gone out of that door to serve their country in the Colonial, Revolutionary¹⁷⁷⁶, and Civil Wars.

Many processions have passed over its threshold. There have been wedding processions and funeral processions. They have all passed and been forgotten long ago, but the old house, untouched by fire or storm, still stands where once they stood; still stands with much stateliness and dignity.

When in its pristine glory, before the Revolution, over its threshold there came as its very first bride, Rachel, the daughter of Captain John Brice of Annapolis, the distinguished Colonist and Captain of the Seven Hundred of Anne Arundel, no less brave, we know, than the Six Hundred of Balaklava.

It was in 1727 that Philip Hammond of the third generation of Hammonds in this country—a very great and good man and an eloquent Senator, holding nearly every position in the gift of the Colony, and besides that he was a man of great wealth, a rich importer doing business with London, with his wharves and warehouses in Annapolis—fell in love with and married Rachel Brice. Rachel was not quite eighteen years of age. Besides her academic course she had embellishments of the mind, and accomplishments, we are told, befitting her station in life, and possessed ease and elegance in all her deportment.

English visitors of that day to Annapolis were always surprised at the wealth and luxury of the homes of that city, and they have said that the magnificent clothing of the men and women of Annapolis "is seldom seen outside of Paris." The Brices, as we know, not only possessed great ability, but great fortune as well. Rachel's trousseau had been ordered by letter-post from London months before, and we know that there was nothing lacking in the elegance of brocades and satins and laces and linens and fans and ribbons and bonnets, etc., etc.

Let us take an enchanted glance upon this Brice-Hammond wedding of two hundred years ago at Annapolis. There were gowns of yellow damask, blue brocades, green velvets and of many other gorgeous hues, mostly draped back from embroidered satin petticoats. The men are not surpassed by the women in the matter of fashion. They spend much time upon the subject of dress, and at this wedding they are looking as brilliant as the ladies in their coats of bright satins and velvets and silks with embroidered waistcoats and knee breeches with silver buckles and perukes and wigs. In and out among this brilliant throng there moves the uniform of the Army, and the scarlet and gold of the British officer. The bride comes in upon the arm of her brother, Chief Justice Brice, who places her hand within that of Philip Hammond. (Captain John Brice, her father, had died some years before.) Rachel is wearing a soft, white brocade, draped back over a satin petticoat embroidered in silver. Her sleeves are short with three frills of old lace. She wears her hair in high coiffure, all powdered, and two curls hang to her shoulders. She wears no veil and all

through the ceremony one may see her blushes come and go.

The groom looks very distinguished in black satin coat, with knee breeches, white waistcoat embroidered in colors, heavy white silk hose and pomps with wrought silver buckles. He is wearing his hair brushed straight back and powdered, and tied with a large bow of black ribbon.

It is a quaint picture they present to us as they stand hand in hand before the Rector, in English gown and wig, and very solemnly they repeat after him, "I, Philip, take thee, Rachel," and she "I, Rachel, take thee, Philip."

After the ceremony and congratulations are all over, they sit down to a great dinner.

All this was in the golden days of Annapolis, the days of wealth, and culture, and of a refinement distinctively belonging to those days of long ago.

The Brices entertained royally, and all that could be said of society in Annapolis at that day is applicable to this great occasion.

At eight o'clock the wedding party wends its way toward the Hammond Manor. There are riders on horseback, there are chariots and coaches, some elegant and imposing, others rickety and showing signs of having served a long period of usefulness. Philip's coach has been imported along with other things from across seas for this, his wedding. Let us glance at it for a moment. It is all in green and gilt, ornamented with bright flowers, and on its panels are shields. Even the ebony-hued coachman and footman in livery feel the dignity and prestige which Marse Philip's wedding lends to them. With the delicate grace and deference of the Colonial

gentleman, Chief Justice Brice tenderly hands his sister into the coach. Philip flings his cloak about him, dons his cocked hat, springs to the side of his bride, and the procession begins to move through the streets of Annapolis with cheering throngs on either side. Coachmen crack their whips and coaches and riders roll off over the rough roads. Arriving here they find the community assembled. The blazing fire and twinkling of many candles reflect soft lights on the surface of polished mahogany and glistening silver and mirrors. Everywhere we see the smiling faces of servants eager to see Marse Philip's bride. The music begins and the dancers glide gracefully to and fro, and merry voices mingle. At midnight the wedding supper is served.

All this in the balmy days before the Revolution; all this at the home and with the parents of the statesmen and heroes who sleep peacefully in the cemetery in the old garden.

In those olden days only the poorer people buried their dead in the churchyard; established families had their private burying grounds on their estates near their homes.

These descendants of Philip and Rachel Hammond who have slept here for so long a time are known to posterity for their learning, their culture, their patriotism. Men are known by their associates. The most intimate friends of these statesmen were Charles Carroll of Carrollton, William Paca, Samuel Chase—men whose lofty ideals went far to mould the destinies of this vast republic.

It has been said of the dark days of the Revolution, "These are the days that try men's souls." The

Hammonds stood the test! These Englishmen, these Royalists, these King's Officers, these one time members of His Majesty's Council, when affairs with the Mother Country reached a crisis, resolutely turned their backs upon all the honors of position and favoritism of the days that had been, and in their unselfish and heroic devotion to the independence of their country, they were unsurpassed by any!

Nine children were born to Philip and Rachel Hammond in their thirty-three years of happy and prosperous married life. Two died in infancy. The distinguished father of this family died in 1760 aged sixty-four. His is the oldest tomb we find here. Rachel survived her husband twenty-five years, and during the years immediately following the death of Philip she had the difficult task of equipping for life's duties at a most disturbed and critical time in history, these six sons and one daughter. They were taught at home or in private schools by English tutors, and the sons later entered King's College at Annapolis, the predecessor of St. John's Academy. They, like other gentlemen of their day, received classical educations. That they were highly educated men, we know, from the records which history has left us of their lives.

Rachel Brice Hammond, a daughter of the Revolution, lived through this crucial time which tried women's souls as well as men's, and during her life at this home where she came as a tender and dainty bride of eighteen, lived to follow the funeral processions of all but one of her family over the threshold of that old door, to this cemetery. It was not until 1785 that this woman of exemplary character, piety and devotion, was herself

laid to rest beside her loved ones under the sod of this little graveyard. Her name should be loved and cherished, and should be an inspiration to the women of this generation. Like others of her time she has passed into the Great Beyond, but the memory of her pious life will ever live in the hearts of the good women of the present generation. In the words of Julia Clinton Jones, herself a Daughter of the American Revolution, we may say of Rachel Brice Hammond that she was one of those

“Loyal women! naught withholding
Home, nor gold, nor love, nor life!
Naught of glory,—naught but honor
Claimed they from that fearful strife.
Grand reserve-troops! there no orders,
There no epaulette shall shine,
Yet when patriot forces muster,
They shall hold the van²⁴ward line.”

To-day, these reconstructed tombs serve to call our attention to the people of the early days of our country—men and women whose figures stand out in bold relief against the background of our country's history. They played their part with distinction in the unsettled times of this land, and in their day filled with honor positions of high civil and military authority. We, the Daughters of the American Revolution, who are stirred by Revolutionary associations, feel in a very intimate way the participation of those who lie here in the trend of events which laid the foundation of our commonwealth.

Many of the tombstones are gone; fortunately, all but two of the family of Revolutionary patriots may be found.

The oldest tomb, as we have said, is that of Philip Hammond who died in 1760. The next who followed him to the cemetery was his daughter, Rachel, who married Doctor Hopkins, and who died in 1773, in the thirty-third year of her age. Then followed Colonel Charles, the eldest son, called the "great land owner." He was ~~an officer of the Revolution, but~~ died in 1777 soon after the conflict began with Great Britain. He and his wife lie here in unmarked graves. Then followed Philip who died in 1783, and Denton, his brother, who died in 1784, and John who died in 1785, whose careers at this time are not so well known to us. Now we come to the tombs of the two youngest sons of Philip and Rachel Hammond. Mathias, the brilliant lawyer, the statesman, the patriot, born in 1740 and who died in 1786 at the age of forty-six. By his side lies his brother Rezin, a fitting place for one whose life had been so close to his own. I would refer you to the Archives of Maryland for the history of these men, Mathias and Rezin, serving as they did upon all the important patriotic committees of that day, and too, their clarion notes were constantly heard in the forum and in the field, calling their countrymen to lofty ideals of patriotism. Their names are found constantly associated with the most prominent men of their time,—always linked with the names of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Samuel Chase, William Paca and other names of fame. An interesting incident which we might mention here is that when Charles Carroll, one of the most highly educated men of his day (having been taught in the Jesuit Colleges of France and having studied law in ^{Paris} ~~Pars~~) wrote those remarkable letters for the "Maryland Ga-

Riley zette" under the nom de plume of "The First Citizen." The General Assembly of Maryland cast about to find someone of equal literary ability to reply to these letters—a man whose mind was equal to this task—and the choice fell upon Mr. Mathias Hammond. For years he was a member of the Committee of Correspondence. This was a work of extreme delicacy and difficulty, as there were Royalists and spies everywhere, and it was the task of this Committee to honeycomb the colony with patriotic literature and propaganda so as to unify the Colonists. He was also a member of the Committee which drafted the Resolutions to stop all Trade Relations with Great Britain. He was a signer of the Declaration of Rights, and one of those who helped to elect the delegates to the Philadelphia Convention of 1776.

I might go on at very great length reciting the patriotic activities of Mathias Hammond and his brother Rezin, but I will stop with the familiar incident of the "Peggy Stewart Tea Party." When the brig "Peggy Stewart," bearing taxable tea came into the port of Annapolis, great excitement reigned in the streets of that city. The letter which was drafted compelling the owner to set fire to his own vessel was drawn up by Mathias Hammond. Mr. Riley, the historian of Annapolis, has told us that Mathias Hammond had more than anyone else to do with the "Peggy Stewart" incident.

The full story of that beautiful and historic character is a fascinating one of intense sincerity, of heroism and of a blighted romance. His town home—the "Harwood House" in Annapolis stands to-day a sad reminder of "love's labor lost."

Mathias Hammond, after a noble career in the service of his country, died March 11th, 1786. The dear old mother who had lived to bury all of her family save one, did not long survive the death of this, her youngest son, of whom she was so justly proud. Just a month after the death of her brilliant Mathias she died, April 11th, 1786, aged seventy-five.

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Colonel Rezin's activities were the same as those of his brother during pre-Revolutionary days, serving with him on many important committees, but when the war began he accepted a commission in the army, and rose to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. At first he was in command of the Severn Battalion, afterwards was appointed to lead the Maryland troops in defense of Philadelphia. Rezin survived his beloved brother, Mathias, twenty-three years. He was the last survivor of this family, and inherited large wealth from his brothers. After the Revolution he built "Burleigh," in Howard County, a piece of classical architecture noted for its beautiful interior carvings. He gave this beautiful home with 2,345 acres of land to his great nephew, Denton, who married Sally Baldwin. Colonel Rezin before his death liberated many of his slaves and gave them land and homes and farming equipment. He died in 1809 and as we have said sleeps beside Mathias.

One would like to mention the names of many of the illustrious dead who rest in this plot. Very especially would we remember the names of Major Philip Hammond and his wife who was Elizabeth Wright, and of that good man, George Washington Hammond and his brother, Dr. Mathias, who lived in the English brick house near Millersville, but to-day we have only to do

with those who lived during the period of the Revolution.

Prompted by the suggestion of our incomparable leader and Regent, Mrs. Robert Welsh, we, Daughters of the American Revolution, descendants and friends, have assembled here to-day to bring to pass after one hundred and thirty-six years this prophecy inscribed upon the tomb of Colonel Rezin Hammond. We have come after a period of one hundred and thirty-six years to make true the words we read here:

“A sweet remembrance of the Just,
Shall flourish when they sleep in dust.”



